

the


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# connection

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The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's **CAHPS® Connection** is an occasional bulletin for the many users of CAHPS products and survey results. Its purpose is to help you stay informed about new CAHPS products, the product development work of the CAHPS Consortium, and various tools and resources that may be useful to you, such as workshops and educational materials.

Please feel free to pass on **The CAHPS Connection**. If you received it from a colleague and would like to be added to the mailing list, contact the CAHPS User Network at [cahps1@ahrq.gov](mailto:cahps1@ahrq.gov). To see previous issues, visit our Web site: [www.cahps.ahrq.gov](http://www.cahps.ahrq.gov).

## new products

### CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey Released Into Public Domain

The CAHPS Consortium is pleased to announce the release of the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey, which enables organizations to measure patients' experiences with individual doctors and clinics. This survey offers the standardization and high levels of validity and reliability that characterize all CAHPS products and surveys. Sponsors can use this instrument for internal purposes, such as identifying opportunities for quality improvement, as well as for public reporting of performance.

All the documents necessary to field the survey are available in the **CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey and Reporting Kit**. To download individual documents or the complete Kit, visit the following page of the CAHPS Web site: <https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/CAHPSkit/cg/cgChooseQx.asp>.

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## What's in the Kit

The **Clinician & Group Survey and Reporting Kit** includes the following documents:

- ♦ The questionnaires in English and Spanish:
  - ♦ **Adult Primary Care Questionnaire** (Documents No. 351a and 351b).
  - ♦ **Adult Specialty Care Questionnaire** (Documents No. 352a and 352b).
  - ♦ **Child Primary Care Questionnaire** (Documents No. 353a and 353b).

Each instrument consists of a set of required core items, followed by a set of optional supplemental items.

- ♦ **Contents of the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey and Reporting Kit** (Document No. 31). This document describes the various components of the Kit. Users who download any part of the Kit will automatically receive this document as well.
- ♦ **CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey: Overview of the Questionnaires** (Document No. 350). This document offers details about each of the three questionnaires and provides a set of tables comparing the topics and questions covered in each of the three core and supplemental item sets.
- ♦ **Preparing a Questionnaire Using the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey** (Document No. 32). This document explains how to customize a questionnaire by adding supplemental items to the core items. It also discusses the formatting and translation of the questionnaire.
- ♦ **Fielding the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey** (Document No. 33). This document provides guidelines and protocols for constructing a sample frame, selecting the sample, administering the questionnaire, collecting data, calculating response rates, and preparing the data to be analyzed.
- ♦ **Sample Notification Letters for the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey** (Document No. 361). These sample letters (provided in both English and

Spanish) are based upon actual notification materials sent to respondents during field tests. Sponsors should modify these letters to meet their project's specifications.

- ♦ **Sample Telephone Script for the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey** (Document No. 362). Sponsors planning to administer the survey by telephone should consult this document, which offers instructions and a sample script for telephone interviews. The telephone script is provided in both English and Spanish.



- ♦ **Reporting Measures for the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey** (Document No. 309). This document lists the items in the survey's reporting measures, which include three composite measures, one global rating, and one single-item measure.
- ♦ **The CAHPS Analysis Program**. Also known as the CAHPS macro, the CAHPS Analysis Program consists of 10 SAS<sup>®</sup> files that allow users to analyze and statistically adjust their survey data in order to make valid comparisons of different providers' scores.
- ♦ **Instructions for Analyzing Data from the CAHPS Health Plan Survey 3.0** (Document No. 15). This document contains instructions on using the CAHPS macro to analyze survey data for reporting purposes. Since this document was written for the Health Plan Survey, the Clinician & Group Survey and Reporting Kit also provides **Supplemental Instructions for Analyzing Results from the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey**



(Document No. 35), which offers guidance on adjusting the CAHPS macro so that it can be used specifically to analyze data from the Clinician & Group Survey.

### For More Information

In addition to providing these Kit materials, the CAHPS User Network offers a number of sources of information about the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey.

- ♦ **Upcoming Webcast.** The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's CAHPS Consortium is presenting a free Webcast focused on this new survey on May 8, 2007. For more information, see the box at right.
- ♦ **The Clinician & Group Survey section of the CAHPS Web site.** This section of the site offers case studies, information about survey development and testing, news, and other related information about the Clinician & Group Survey. Go to [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/CG/PROD\\_CG\\_CG40Products.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/CG/PROD_CG_CG40Products.asp).
- ♦ **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the CAHPS Web site.** The CAHPS User Network has developed an extensive list of FAQs and will continue to add new FAQs on the Clinician & Group Survey. To browse the current FAQs related to the Clinician & Group Survey, go to [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/cahpsOverview/faqanswer.asp?cat\\_id=6&result=1&hassub=0&p=101&s=17](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/cahpsOverview/faqanswer.asp?cat_id=6&result=1&hassub=0&p=101&s=17).
- ♦ **Past CAHPS Connection articles.** Several previous issues of *The CAHPS Connection* have featured articles about the Clinician & Group Survey. These articles contain specific details about the development process that may be of interest to survey sponsors. The following articles are available:
  - ♦ [Clinician & Group Survey Undergoes NQF Review](#) (November 2006)
  - ♦ [Massachusetts Health Quality Partners: Public Reporting at the Practice-Site Level](#) (June 2006)
  - ♦ [Notes from the Field: An Update on the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey](#) (March 2006)

## free webcast

May 8, 2007 – 1:30 – 3:00 ET

### The Clinician & Group Survey: What You Need To Know About AHRQ's Newest CAHPS® Instrument

On May 8, 2007, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) CAHPS Consortium will present a free Webcast to introduce you to the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey, which is designed to capture the experiences of patients with physicians and their staff.

Attend this Webcast to get answers to these questions and more:

- What questionnaires are included in this survey, and what topics do they cover?
- What has happened since our June 2004 Webcast on this topic? (For more information on this earlier Webcast, visit: [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/community/events/COMM\\_EVENTS\\_webcast2004-06-24.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/community/events/COMM_EVENTS_webcast2004-06-24.asp).)
- How does this survey differ from other CAHPS ambulatory care surveys? How is it the same?
- How should I administer this survey?
- How can I report the results, and to whom?
- Will benchmarking information be available?

Speakers will include the following members of the CAHPS Consortium: Chuck Darby of AHRQ, Julie Brown of the RAND Corporation team, Kristin Carman of the American Institutes for Research (AIR) team, and Dale Shaller of the Harvard team. We also anticipate that current users of the survey will be available to share their experiences with this measurement tool.

To register for the Webcast, go to [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/community/events/COMM\\_EVENTS\\_C&G\\_Webcast\\_07.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/community/events/COMM_EVENTS_C&G_Webcast_07.asp).



- ♦ [PBGH Peels Back the Layers of Health Care Delivery in California](#) (March 2006)
- ♦ [A Progress Report on the New Clinician & Group Survey](#) (December 2005)

- ♦ [A Closer Look at Ambulatory CAHPS: Assessing Patients' Experiences with Clinicians and Groups](#) (October 2004)
- ♦ [The Development of Ambulatory CAHPS \(A-CAHPS\)](#) (May 2004)

## CAHPS American Indian Survey Available to Tribal Nations

Organizations interested in assessing the health care experiences of American Indians with tribal clinics now have access to a new CAHPS instrument tailored to their needs. While the CAHPS American Indian Survey was originally developed for the Choctaw Nation, it is in the public domain and available for use by any other tribes interested in measuring and improving the quality of care they deliver.

Review the CAHPS American Indian Survey: [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/AI/CAHPS\\_AI\\_Survey.pdf](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/AI/CAHPS_AI_Survey.pdf).

### Topics Covered

Based in part on the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey, this instrument currently includes 77 items that cover the following topics:

- ♦ Getting care quickly.
- ♦ Getting needed care.
- ♦ Communication with providers.
- ♦ Shared decisionmaking.
- ♦ Courtesy/respect and helpfulness of clerks and receptionists.
- ♦ Health education.
- ♦ Perceived discrimination.

The questionnaire also includes two global rating items, which ask respondents to rate their primary doctor/nurse and clinic on a scale of 0 to 10.

### Development of the Survey

This survey was developed by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the RAND

Corporation in collaboration with the Choctaw Nation Health Services (CNHS). Key steps in the development of the survey included:

- ♦ **Development and review of a first draft** based on input from CNHS and the Consortium's survey experience.
- ♦ **Cognitive testing of the initial draft** with patients at three CNHS clinics.
- ♦ **Field testing** of a revised draft instrument at five CNHS clinics.

To learn more about the development process, or to review the field test report, go to [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/AI/PROD\\_AI\\_AIIntro.asp?p=1021&s=216#Development](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/AI/PROD_AI_AIIntro.asp?p=1021&s=216#Development).

### For Potential Survey Users

In order to refine the American Indian Survey in the future, AHRQ invites users of the instrument to share information on their survey activities and results. If you are planning to field this survey, or if you have any questions about it, please contact Chuck Darby, a CAHPS Project Officer at AHRQ, at [charles.darby@ahrq.hhs.gov](mailto:charles.darby@ahrq.hhs.gov) or 301-427-1324.

Sponsors of the American Indian Survey can use the sampling protocols and data collection guidelines provided in the **CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey and Reporting Kit**: <https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/cahpskit/CG/CGChooseQx.asp>.

More information about the American Indian Survey is available on the CAHPS Web site at [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/AI/PROD\\_AI\\_AIIntro.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/AI/PROD_AI_AIIntro.asp).





## Health Plan Survey Adds New Items for People With Mobility Impairments

For several years, the CAHPS Consortium has been working with a number of agencies and organizations that serve disabled populations to create an item set that focuses on the experiences of people with mobility impairments (PWMI). The PWMI Item Set can be used with the commercial or Medicaid version of the CAHPS Health Plan Survey 4.0.

### Purpose of this Item Set

The PWMI Item Set allows sponsors to:

- ♦ Assess the health care experiences of health plan members who have lower-limb mobility impairments, and
- ♦ Compare their experiences to those of similar people in other health plans and/or people without impairments in the same plan.

### Topics Addressed by the Items

The PWMI Item Set consists of 21 questions, three of which serve as a “screener” that is used during the data analysis step to identify adults with mobility impairments.

Twenty of the questions cover 11 topics:

- ♦ Use of mobility equipment (Screeners).
- ♦ Ability to walk and/or difficulty in walking a quarter mile (Screeners—2 items).
- ♦ Getting physical and occupational therapy.
- ♦ Getting speech therapy.
- ♦ Getting or replacing mobility equipment.
- ♦ Getting mobility equipment repaired.
- ♦ Getting weighed at the doctor’s office.
- ♦ Getting examined on the examination table.

### Update on the CAHPS Nursing Home Surveys

Over the course of 2006, the CAHPS Team made considerable progress on the CAHPS Nursing Home Surveys, which will include three instruments: a Long-Stay Resident Instrument, a Discharged Resident Instrument, and a Family Instrument. The Team recently finalized the Long-Stay Resident Instrument, which is available on the CAHPS Web site along with some administrative guidelines and related materials. The Discharged Resident Instrument and Family Instrument are in the final stages of testing.

To learn more about the CAHPS Nursing Home Surveys, visit [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/NH/PROD\\_NH\\_Intro.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/NH/PROD_NH_Intro.asp).

- ♦ Difficulty moving around the restroom.
- ♦ Pain.
- ♦ Fatigue.

One question simply confirms that the respondent had a visit with a personal doctor in the past year.

### Where You Can Find These Items

A list of the supplemental items for people with mobility impairments is provided at [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/PWMI/PROD\\_PWMI\\_Intro.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/PWMI/PROD_PWMI_Intro.asp). The items are also listed in the Health Plan Survey 4.0 supplemental sets (English and Spanish), which you can download from the **Health Plan Survey and Reporting Kit** (<https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/cahpskit/Healthplan/HPChooseQx2.asp>). Those documents include instructions on where to place each item among the core (required) items of the CAHPS Health Plan Survey 4.0.

Learn more about the PWMI Item Set: [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/cahpskit/files/1110\\_PWMI\\_Description.pdf](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/cahpskit/files/1110_PWMI_Description.pdf).



## Dental Plan Survey Accepted as CAHPS Product

The Dental Plan Survey is a new CAHPS questionnaire designed to measure adult patients' experiences with their dental plan and its services. This instrument is the result of a collaborative effort between the American Institutes for Research (AIR), one of the CAHPS grantees, and TRICARE, the Department of Defense's health plan for military personnel and their dependents. It is available for use by States, purchasers, and other organizations interested in assessing, improving, and reporting on the quality and value of care offered by dental plans.

### Topics Covered

The Dental Plan Survey consists of 39 items:

- ♦ Three eligibility items.
- ♦ Twenty-eight substantive items (7 of which are still being tested).
- ♦ Eight "About You" items.

The substantive items ask patients to report on topics such as the information provided by dental plans, communication with the dentist, management of comfort, and the accessibility of services.

Review the Dental Plan Survey: [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/Dental/CAHPS\\_Dental\\_Plan\\_Survey\\_1-30.pdf](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/Dental/CAHPS_Dental_Plan_Survey_1-30.pdf).

### Development of the Survey

When they initiated work on this survey in October 2004, AIR and TRICARE sought to develop a tool that would provide comparative benchmarks of dental care quality across dental plans. They employed the CAHPS methodology of survey development to ensure the reliability and validity of the patient-reported data. The steps in that development process included the following:

- ♦ A review of existing surveys, measures, and published literature relating to patients' experiences with dental care.

- ♦ Interviews and focus groups with stakeholders regarding survey domains and topics as well as strategies for achieving optimal response rates.
- ♦ Cognitive testing with potential survey respondents to determine how patients might understand and react to proposed survey questions.
- ♦ Field testing with TRICARE beneficiaries and dependents, utilizing mail and Internet as administration modes.
- ♦ Statistical analysis of field test data to estimate the reliability and validity of survey scores.
- ♦ Revision of the questionnaire based on cognitive and field testing results.

The end product was a scientifically rigorous questionnaire, resembling a CAHPS instrument in emphasis, style, and approach. As a result, the leadership of the CAHPS Consortium voted in December 2006 to adopt the survey as an official CAHPS instrument.



### For Potential Survey Users

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and AIR would like to hear from any organizations that use the CAHPS Dental Plan Survey so that we can learn from your experience. If you are planning to field the Dental Plan Survey, or if you have any questions about it, please contact us at [cahps1@ahrq.gov](mailto:cahps1@ahrq.gov) or 1-800-492-9261.

More information about the Dental Plan Survey is available on the CAHPS Web site at [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/Dental/PROD\\_Dental\\_Intro.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/Dental/PROD_Dental_Intro.asp).



## work-in-progress

### New Products To Be Completed in CAHPS III

As the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) prepares for the third 5-year phase of the CAHPS program, it anticipates the completion of a number of new CAHPS surveys and items sets that are in the early stages of development. Here are brief descriptions of several new products on the horizon.

#### CAHPS Home Health Care Survey

Home health care refers to the provision of skilled nursing care as well as other skilled care services, such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology. In this AHRQ-funded project, the CAHPS Consortium is working with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), which pays for most of the home health care provided in the United States. Other potential users of this instrument include State agencies, home health care providers, and other organizations that serve patient communities.

In the fall of 2006, the Consortium initiated the development of the CAHPS Home Health Care Survey; to date, this process has included a literature review, a call for measures in the *Federal Register*, focus groups and interviews with key stakeholders, and a Technical Expert Panel (TEP) meeting. To learn more, go to [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/HH/PROD\\_HH\\_Intro.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/HH/PROD_HH_Intro.asp).

#### CAHPS Health Literacy Item Set

AHRQ defines health literacy as patients' ability to obtain, process, and understand the basic health information and services they need to make appropriate health decisions. One of the Agency's continuing goals is to encourage a greater emphasis in the provider community on patient-centered care, a key component of which is improved health literacy among patients. To that end, AHRQ has asked the CAHPS Consortium to develop a set of supplemental survey items (for use with either the Health Plan Survey or the Clinician & Group Survey) to assess providers' activities to foster and improve patients' health literacy.

Under the lead of RAND Corporation, the CAHPS grantees have begun the preliminary work on this item set, including a review of existing literature and survey instruments, interviews with key stakeholders to determine domains and topics of interest, and a call for measures published in the *Federal Register*. More information is available at [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/HL/PROD\\_HL\\_Intro.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/HL/PROD_HL_Intro.asp).



#### CAHPS Health Information Technology Item Set

Health information technology (HIT) has played an increasingly important role in medical practices around the country, encompassing such advancements as secure electronic messaging, electronic medical records, medication lists, personal health records, and appointment scheduling. To assess the impact of these technologies on patients' experiences with care, the CAHPS Consortium has initiated the development of the CAHPS Health Information Technology Item Set, intended for use with the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey.

AHRQ hosted a meeting in June 2006 with CAHPS grantees, HIT experts, and other stakeholders to discuss various aspects and uses of HIT, as well as the ways in which a set of CAHPS survey questions might address this topic. The Consortium will continue to work on this item set over the next year or so; the Agency expects to release the items sometime during the CAHPS III phase of the project. To learn more, go to [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/HIT/PROD\\_HIT\\_Intro.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/HIT/PROD_HIT_Intro.asp).





## CAHPS in action

### Wisconsin Tries New Item Set for People With Mobility Impairments

Like many State Medicaid programs, Wisconsin's Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) has spent the last decade transitioning "healthier" Medicaid populations, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) beneficiaries, from traditional fee-for-service (FFS) into mandatory managed care programs. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Aged, Blind and Disabled (ABD) beneficiaries remained in the FFS programs. But now, Wisconsin's DHFS is taking on the tougher challenge of moving this medically needy population into managed care programs.

To ensure that this population is getting adequate access to care, it is essential to monitor this change and its impact on these Medicaid recipients. With the addition of the Item Set for People With Mobility Impairments (PWMI), the CAHPS Health Plan Survey is becoming a critical component in the State's efforts to gather information on quality from the patients' perspective as part of a larger initiative to monitor overall health care quality.

#### How DHFS Uses the Survey

The State is working through this transition to managed care plans in phases by metropolitan area. In each area, the State conducts a baseline survey of fee-for-service recipients before they move into a managed care plan. A followup survey is then done in each area after the move to assess the effect of managed care on the consumers' perceptions of care.

So far, the State has used the CAHPS Health Plan Survey 4.0 with the PWMI Item Set as the baseline survey in five counties that have transitioned. The first area to go through the transition to managed care was Milwaukee. The new PWMI Item Set was not yet available when this occurred, so the State used an instrument adapted from the CAHPS Health Plan Survey. However, the State is now ready to return to Milwaukee to gather followup data, and will be using the new item set for this purpose.

### Looking Ahead: Sharing the Information

For Wisconsin DHFS, the CAHPS PWMI Item Set fills a significant gap. While they had used CAHPS supplemental items in the past, they had found the results insufficient for their needs. The new item set enables Wisconsin to assess aspects of quality that they could not measure before, using items that have been tested and validated.

As DHFS rolls out the SSI managed care program to more metropolitan areas, they will continue to collect more data. Over time, this should reveal trends in consumer experience. The data will be reported to the health plans to help them see how well they are meeting the needs of this vulnerable population. The data will also serve to inform quality oversight activities and will be shared with other stakeholders.

For more information, please contact Ruthanne Landsness at [rlandsness@apshealthcare.com](mailto:rlandsness@apshealthcare.com).

### New Web Site Presents California Hospitals' H-CAHPS Results

In March, the California HealthCare Foundation (CHCF) launched CalHospitalCompare.org (<http://www.calhospitalcompare.org/>), a consumer-friendly, Web-based report on the comparative quality of 210 hospitals throughout California. In addition to providing information on clinical care and patient safety, the site includes information on participating hospitals' performance in several key measures from the CAHPS Hospital Survey (H-CAHPS). The site displays the H-CAHPS measures for different conditions and procedures (e.g., pneumonia, heart bypass surgery), so that users can focus on the experiences of patients who received hospital care for specific reasons.

In gathering data and developing this site, CHCF collaborated with the University of California at San Francisco Institute for Health Policy Studies and the California Hospital Assessment and Reporting Taskforce (CHART). For more information, contact CHCF Communications Officer Steven Birenbaum at [sbirenbaum@chcf.org](mailto:sbirenbaum@chcf.org).





## user resources

### Consortium Updates Translation Guidelines

Part of the process of developing and finalizing CAHPS survey products is the development of Spanish versions. By making surveys available in both English and Spanish, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's CAHPS Consortium hopes to meet the needs of most users in the United States.

However, we are well aware that some survey sponsors need questionnaires in other languages that are prevalent among the populations they wish to survey. The ability to capture the health care experiences of non-English speakers and compare it to those of English speakers is critical to assessing the "equity" domain of health care quality.

To that end, the CAHPS Consortium offers new guidelines that lead survey sponsors and vendors through a recommended process for producing a translated version of a CAHPS survey: *Guidelines for Translating CAHPS Surveys* ([https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/resources/pdf/Guidelines\\_Translation.pdf](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/resources/pdf/Guidelines_Translation.pdf)). These guidelines call for the use of two simultaneous translators and a translation review to ensure the quality and cultural appropriateness of the translated instrument.

This new document complements an earlier set of guidelines focusing on the role of translators and translation reviewers: *The Assessment and Selection of Translators and Translation Reviewers* (<https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/resources/pdf/CAHPS%20Translator%20selection%20guidelines%201-06-051.pdf>).

More general advice on this topic is available on the CAHPS Web site at [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/resources/CrossCultural/RES\\_CC\\_GuidelinesForTranslating.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/resources/CrossCultural/RES_CC_GuidelinesForTranslating.asp).

## CAHPS 101

### Composite Measures

*Edited by RAND CAHPS Team*

When a CAHPS survey is released to the public, the Survey and Reporting Kit for that instrument includes a list of the measures that sponsors can use for reporting purposes. Those measures include composite measures as well as ratings (i.e., how respondents rated their experiences with a provider on a scale of 0 to 10).

A composite measure summarizes the answers to two or more related survey questions or "items." The CAHPS Consortium recommends their use in reports for two reasons:

- ♦ First, composites can represent concepts that are too complex to be measured with a single item. For example, the concept of "good doctor-patient communication" touches on a variety of issues, such as how well a doctor listens to patients, how clearly a doctor explains things, and whether a doctor establishes and maintains a personal connection to patients. A single item about any one of these issues would only provide part of the picture on doctor-patient communication, whereas a composite provides gives the bigger picture.
- ♦ Second, using composite measures helps to ensure that consumers are not overwhelmed by too much information. Research shows that when people receive too many pieces of information at once, their ability to pay attention to, think about, and remember the information provided is compromised. Composite measures summarize several pieces of information so that consumers do not get bogged down in details.

To learn more, consult our extensive list of questions and answers about the design and use of CAHPS survey products: <https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/cahpsOverview/faq.asp>.

Links to the composite measures of various CAHPS surveys are provided on the next page.



## Composite Measures for CAHPS Surveys

**Health Plan Survey 4.0:** [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/CAHPSkit/files/1108\\_HP40\\_ReportingMeasures.htm](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/CAHPSkit/files/1108_HP40_ReportingMeasures.htm)

**Health Plan Survey 3.0:** [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/CAHPSkit/files/cd108\\_Reporting\\_Measures\\_for\\_theHealthPlanSurvey.htm](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/CAHPSkit/files/cd108_Reporting_Measures_for_theHealthPlanSurvey.htm)

**Clinician & Group Survey:** [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/cahpskit/files/309\\_C&G\\_Reporting\\_Measures.htm](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/cahpskit/files/309_C&G_Reporting_Measures.htm)

**ECHO® Survey (behavioral health):** [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/cahpskit/files/209\\_ECHO%20Reporting%20Measures.htm](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/cahpskit/files/209_ECHO%20Reporting%20Measures.htm)

**In-Center Hemodialysis Survey:** [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/cahpskit/files/509\\_ICH\\_Reporting\\_Measures.htm](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/cahpskit/files/509_ICH_Reporting_Measures.htm)

## CAHPS Database news

*This section of The CAHPS Connection provides updates on the activities and products of the National CAHPS Benchmarking Database (the CAHPS Database).*

### health plan survey database

#### New Commercial Data Sharing Agreement with NCQA

The CAHPS Database has entered into an agreement with the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) to obtain data from the Adult and Child Commercial Questionnaires of the CAHPS Health Plan Survey. The CAHPS Database will include these data in its annual *CAHPS Health Plan Survey Chartbook* as well as in its data files for researchers. As a result of this agreement, the CAHPS Database will no longer be requesting direct submissions from commercial health plan sponsors.

Partnering with NCQA on the commercial data will streamline the submission process for health plans and vendors and will help remove confusion in the marketplace from having two national databases. This change will take effect in 2007, and will cover commercial data submissions for CAHPS 4.0H for adults and CAHPS 3.0H for children.

While we will continue producing the *CAHPS Health Plan Survey Chartbook* and research data files with these commercial data from NCQA, we will no longer be compiling commercial sponsor reports. We will, however, continue to receive direct submissions of Health Plan Survey data from Medicaid agencies and State Children's Health Insurance Programs (SCHIP), and will produce sponsor reports for them.

### Schedule for Product Releases

September 2007	<i>2007 Health Plan Survey Chartbook</i>
October 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medicaid sponsor reports</li> <li>• SCHIP sponsor reports</li> <li>• Research files</li> </ul>

### 2007 Medicaid and SCHIP Data Submissions

The online 2007 CAHPS Health Plan Survey Data Submission System will open for Medicaid agencies and State Children's Health Insurance Programs (SCHIP) on May 14. Sponsors and their designated vendors are encouraged to submit their information as soon as possible. All required information, including data files, must be received and approved no later than **June 29, 2007**.

We will be accepting the following survey versions from Medicaid and SCHIP sponsors wishing to participate in the 2007 CAHPS Health Plan Survey Database:



- ♦ **Adult Medicaid Questionnaire:** 4.0 or 4.0H.
- ♦ **Child Medicaid (or SCHIP) Questionnaire with the Children with Chronic Conditions Item Set:** 3.0 or 3.0H.
- ♦ **Child Medicaid (or SCHIP) Questionnaire (no Children with Chronic Conditions Item Set):** 3.0, 3.0H, or 4.0.

## Training

We will be offering submission training through conference calls on May 9 and 10 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. For information regarding training, contact the CAHPS Database at [ncbd1@ahrq.gov](mailto:ncbd1@ahrq.gov) or 1-888-808-7108.

## Elements of a Complete Submission

A complete data submission includes the following components:

- ♦ **Sponsor Information.** Participants must first register their name and contact information with the CAHPS Database to request a sponsor account.
- ♦ **Data Use Agreement.** The agreement specifies the terms of participation for the CAHPS Database and must be signed by an authorized sponsor representative.
- ♦ **Health Plan Information.** For each health plan sample included in the CAHPS survey, sponsors/vendors must enter information on selected plan characteristics.

- ♦ **CAHPS Questionnaire.** Sponsors/vendors must submit a copy of the CAHPS questionnaire(s) they administered.
- ♦ **Data File for Each Health Plan.** Sponsors/vendors must submit a data file for each plan sample included in the CAHPS survey administration.



To access the online submission system, go to <https://ncbd.cahps.org/plancahps/default.asp>.

Additional details about data submission are available in the CAHPS Database section of our Web site: [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/NCBD/HP/NCBD\\_HP\\_HPParticipation.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/NCBD/HP/NCBD_HP_HPParticipation.asp).

Please e-mail any questions about data submission to [ncbd1@ahrq.gov](mailto:ncbd1@ahrq.gov).

## hospital survey database

### New Interactive Chartbook for Hospital Data

We are pleased to introduce the new Interactive Chartbook, which presents national, summary-level results for the CAHPS Hospital Survey (H-CAHPS). Developed by a team at Westat, this resource is now available for use at <https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/TabulationSystem/home/default.asp>.

The Interactive Chartbook currently includes data from the 254 hospitals that voluntarily submitted their test H-CAHPS data in 2005 (these are the data presented in the 2006 *CAHPS Hospital Survey Chartbook*). We plan to add the new set of H-CAHPS data (see next article) to this Interactive Chartbook later this spring.

We welcome your comments and suggestions on this new resource as we prepare to release the 2006 data. To give us your feedback, send an e-mail to [ncbd1@ahrq.gov](mailto:ncbd1@ahrq.gov).

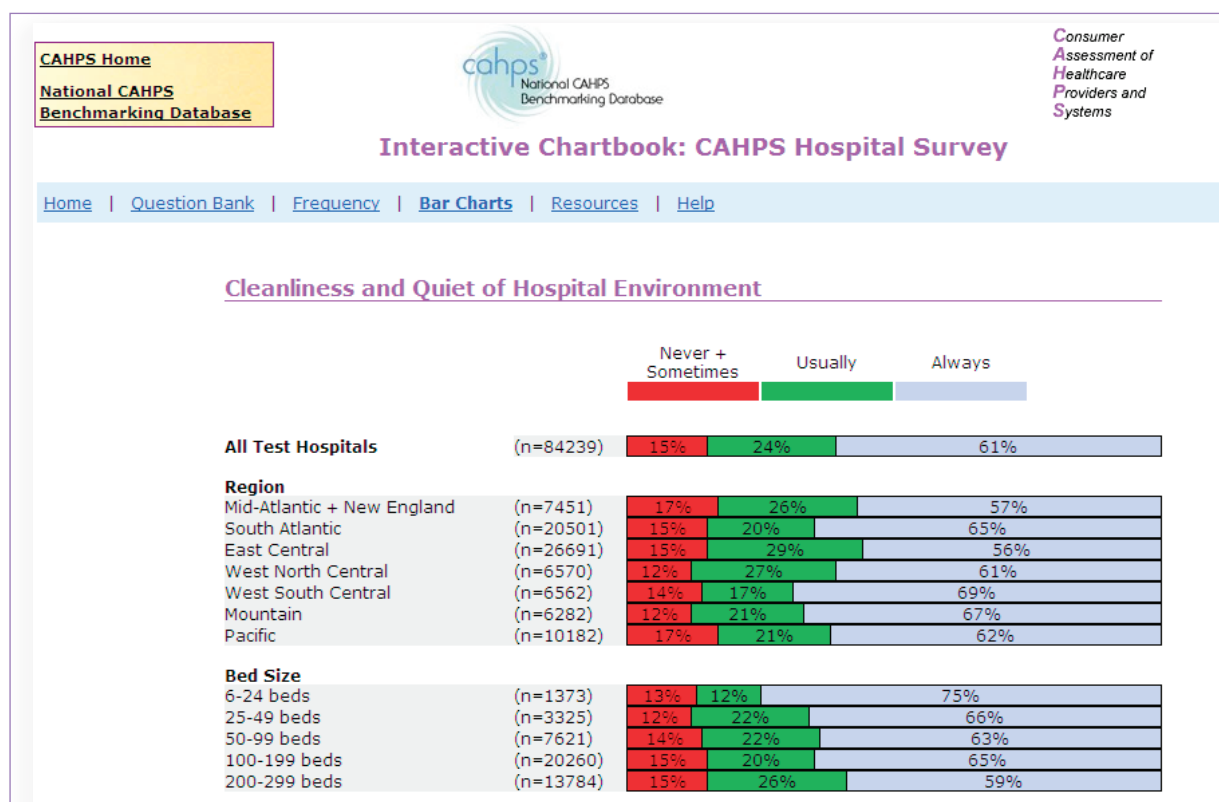


## 2007 CAHPS Hospital Survey Chartbook

In response to our open invitation to contribute to a new edition of the *CAHPS Hospital Survey Chartbook*, over 900 hospitals that conducted the Hospital Survey in 2006 have submitted survey results to the CAHPS Database. These submissions represent approximately 190,000 completed surveys of patients discharged between December 2005 and September 2006.

We are currently merging, cleaning, and processing these data files to create a 2007 version of the Interactive Chartbook, as well as a summary report of key findings. In both cases, we will report only summary-level results broken out by key hospital characteristics and percentile groupings; no individual hospitals will be identified. We expect to release the new *Chartbook* in May.

### Sample page from the 2006 Interactive Chartbook



### CAHPS Database Contact Information

- E-mail: [ncbd1@ahrq.gov](mailto:ncbd1@ahrq.gov)
- Web: [www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/ncbd/ncbd\\_intro.asp](http://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/ncbd/ncbd_intro.asp)
- Phone: 1-888-808-7108
- Mail: CAHPS Database, Room RA 1157, 1650 Research Blvd., Rockville, MD 20850





## comments or questions?

The CAHPS User Network welcomes your comments and questions. Please contact us:

- E-mail: [cahps1@ahrq.gov](mailto:cahps1@ahrq.gov)
- Phone: 1-800-492-9261

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